

THE BELMONT CHRONICLE.

AND FARMERS, MECHANICS, AND MANUFACTURERS' ADVOCATE.

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serviceable kind. His talents are ordinary,

but his perseverance, tenacity, power of dis-

simulation, and inflexibility of will, are ex-

traordinary. He is a memorable and most in-

structive example that great achievements are

within the reach of a very moderate intellect,

when that intellect is concentrated upon a

single object, and linked with unbending and

undaunted resolution. Moreover, his mental

endowments, through neither varied nor com-

prehensive, are very vigorous. He is natu-

rally shrewd, secret, and impenetrable. He has

the invaluable faculty of silence. He has,

too, been a patient and able observer. He

has studied politics in Switzerland, in Amer-

ica; and in England; he has devoted his mind

to that one subject. He is, too, a deep think-

er. He ponders much; which few Frenchmen

do. His six years' captivity in Ham matured

and strengthened, by silent meditation,

whatever natural capacities he may have pos-

sessed. He writes well and speaks well; and

all his writings and speeches, even where

they betray the narrow limits of his knowl-

edge, indicate an eminently thoughtful mind.

He has brooded over the history, politics and

social condition of France, till on these sub-

jects he is probably one of the best informed

men in the country, though, like most of his

countrymen, wedded to many absurd and im-

practicable notions, which a better knowl-

edge of political economy would explode.

It is certain, also, that whatever he does

and says is his own. He acts and speaks for

himself, without reference and without as-

sistance. He listens to every one, asks advice

from no one, gives his interlocutors no idea

whether or not their arguments have made the

least impression upon him, but resolves his

plans in the gloomy recesses of his own brain,

and brings them forth matured, homogeneous,

and unexpected. The minutest details of the

conspiration were arranged by himself. All

those from Changerier and Thiers down to

Faucher, who have endeavored to lead, drive,

or govern him, have all been baffled, outwitted,

and cast aside. When he rose at the table

at Bordeaux to make his recent celebrated

speech, he observed to his Minister on Foreign

Affairs, who sat next to him—"Now I am go-

ing to astonish you not a little." When he

announced his intention of visiting Abdel

Kader at Annaba, General St. Arnaud ex-

pressed his hope that Louis Napoleon would

not think of liberating him, made a long

speech, expository of all the evils that would

result from such a piece of Quixotic gen-

erosity, and quitted the President quite sat-

isfied that he had succeeded in banishing any

scheme from his thoughts. Nor was it till he

actually heard Louis Napoleon announcing to

his captive his approaching freedom, that he

was aware how much good argument he had

thrown away. Whatever, therefore, of sag-

acity or wisdom is displayed in the language

or conduct of the new Emperor, must be cred-

ited to himself alone.

But we shall greatly and dangerously mis-

conceive Louis Napoleon, if we regard him

as a man of shrewdness, reflection and cal-

culation only. The most prominent feature

of his character is a wild, irregular roman-

tesque imagination—which often overrides all

his reasoning and reflective faculties, and

spurs him on to actions and attempts which

seem insane if they fail, and the acme of splen-

dor if they succeed. The abortions of

Starsbourg and Boulogne, and coup d'etat

of last December, were equally the dictates—

like the legitimate progeny—of that same

monstrous peculiarity. He believes, too, in his

"star." He is even a blinder and rasher

fanatic than his uncle. From early childhood

he believed himself destined to restore the

Dynasty of the Buonapartists, and the old

glories of the Empire. He brooded over this

imagined destiny during long years of exile,

and in the weary days and nights of his im-

prisonment, till it acquired in his fancy the

solidity and dimensions of an ordained fact.

He twice attempted to pluck the pear before

it was ripe. His ludicrous failure in no de-

gree discouraged him, or shook his conviction

of ultimate success. He only waited for an-

other opportunity, and prepared for it with

more sedulous diligence and caution. He

"bided his time"; the time came: he struck

and won. After such success—after having

risen in four years from being an impoverished

exile to being Emperor of France—after

having played the boldest stroke known

in modern history—after having discomfited,

deceived, and overpowered the cleverest, the

most popular, the most eminent, and the most

experienced men in France—we may well be-

lieve that his faith in his "destiny" is con-

firmed and rooted almost to the pitch of mon-

omania, and that no future achievements, no

further pinnacle of greatness, will so easily

be possible to him after a Past so event-

ful, marvellous, and demoralizing.

Another peculiarity of his character is, that

he never abandons an idea or a project he

has once entertained. If he meets difficulties

and opposition he dismounts his postures;

he never really yields or changes. Cold,

patient, and insupportable, he waits and

watches, and returns to his purpose when the

favorable moment has arrived. History affords

few examples of such a pertinacious, endur-

ing, relentless, inexorable will. This, of itself,

is a species of greatness of the most formid-

able kind. If, then, to this delineation we add

that, reserved and silent as he is, he has the

art of attracting warmly to him those who

have been long about him, and who have lived

intimately with him; that, like most fatal-

ists, he is wholly unscrupulous and unhesitating

as to his agents and his means; and that he

entertains and has deliberately matured the

most extensive, deep, and magnificent

schemes of foreign policy, we have exhausted

nearly all that we can speak of as certain